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ABSTRACT

This report presents the consensus of the Assembly Bill 1264 Task Force. The task force conducted a statewide review of standards and requirements pertinent to the preparation of teachers and other educators to serve as active partners with parents and guardians in the education of California's public school students. The report includes: an introduction to the issue; a review of California initiatives instituted to encourage greater home-school collaboration; a rationale for linking family involvement to educator standards; a review of current educator standards and requirements regarding family involvement in national teacher education reform projects; a discussion of desired outcomes and features of educator partnership preparation; a framework of activities illustrating an expanded definition of family-school partnerships, and 10 recommendations for improving the ways in which educators are prepared to work productively with families; including a suggested standard for various credentialing areas and several steps to immediately assist and reward efforts to improve the readiness of educators for school-family collaboration. An appendix presents the recommended standard of program quality and effectiveness for educator preparation in home-school partnerships. (Contains 40 references.) (SM)

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Preparing Educators for Partnerships with Families

Report of the Advisory Task Force on Educator Preparation for Parent Involvement

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Preparing Educators for Partnerships with Families

Report of the Advisory Task Force on Educator Preparation for Parent Involvement

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Preparing Educators for Partnerships with Families

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Preparing Educators for Partnerships with Families

Report of the Advisory Task Force on Educator Preparation for Parent Involvement

California Commission on Teacher Credentialing
1998

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The enactment of Assembly Bill 1264 (Martinez) formally initiated a statewide review by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing of standards and requirements pertinent to the preparation of teachers and other educators to serve as active partners with parents and guardians in the education of students in California public schools. To implement this new statute, the Commission formed the AB 1264 Task Force to suggest new standards both to the Senate Bill 1422 Advisory Panel, which was engaged in a comprehensive review of all requirements for prospective teachers, and to others who were reviewing requirements for other certificated school personnel.

The present report includes background information and a rationale for substantial changes in the way professional training programs and individual educators are evaluated in terms of their preparation to initiate and sustain home-school partnerships.

This report represents the consensus of the AB 1264 Task Force and is intended to inform the SB 1422 study and guide the Commission in the development and revision of Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for educator preparation programs with regard to establishing effective, collaborative partnerships between educators and families. The paper includes:

- *An introduction to the research on family involvement;*
- *A review of California initiatives instituted to encourage greater home-school collaboration;*
- *A rationale for linking family involvement to educator standards;*
- *A review of current educator standards and requirements relevant to family involvement in national teacher education reform projects;*
- *A discussion of desired outcomes and features of educator partnership preparation;*
- *A framework of activities illustrating an expanded definition of family-school partnerships that should guide thinking about the preparation of educators; and*
- *Ten recommendations for improving the way educators are prepared to work productively with families, including a suggested standard for various credential areas, and several steps to immediately assist and reward efforts to improve the readiness of educators for school-family collaboration.*

It is the sincere hope of the AB 1264 Task Force that the ideas and recommendations in this report will facilitate a change in the beginning preparation, initial induction and ongoing development of educators that will impact school communities and result in greater family involvement and improved student achievement.

In brief, the AB 1264 Task Force recommends the following actions:

(1) *The Commission should adopt the standard found in Appendix A and incorporate it into the Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Professional Teacher Preparation Programs for Multiple and Single Subject Teaching Credentials.*

(2) *The Commission should forward the standard listed in Appendix A to each of its expert Advisory Panels in other credential areas with the expectation that each of these panels will adapt the standard as appropriate to each specific credential area.*

(3) *The Commission should distribute relevant parts of the Report of the AB 1264 Task Force to the 72 postsecondary education institutions in California with approved teacher preparation programs; the California State Legislature; and a number of other individuals and organizations.*

(4) *The Commission, in consultation with the California Department of Education, should sponsor workshops throughout the State for teacher educators, teachers, administrators, other members of the education community, and parents.*

(5) *The Commission should hold an informed discussion during 1996 to discuss the work of the AB 1264 Task Force. Institutions and schools with exemplary practice in this area should be highlighted.*

(6) *As part of its annual Day of the Teacher Celebration, the Commission should recognize teachers who demonstrate exemplary practice in collaborating with families.*

(7) *The Commission should incorporate a comprehensive vision of family-school collaboration into the forthcoming Performance Standards for Beginning Teachers, which are to be based on the California Standards for the Teaching Profession.*

(8) *The Commission and the California Department of Education should continue efforts to make information about effective family-school collaboration practices available through the Internet and other means of communication.*

(9) *The Commission, in consultation with the California Department of Education, should jointly convene a Task Force to develop guidelines for professional development focused on enhancing the skills of the existing workforce in the area of family-school collaboration.*

(10) *The Commission, with the cooperation of the California Department of Education and the Intersegmental Coordinating Council, should invite a broad cross-section of the education community and professional associations to collaborate on the development of an incentive system for teacher preparation institutions to develop exemplary programs in the area of family-school collaboration.*

Preparing Educators for Partnerships with Families

Report of the Advisory Task Force on Educator Preparation for Parent Involvement

California Commission on Teacher Credentialing 1998

Introduction

The Premise and the Problem

In an increasingly complex, competitive, and interdependent world, students leaving school need to be highly literate and knowledgeable in disciplinary content areas and be able to work with others to solve problems in new and creative ways. These requirements present many new challenges to our educational system at a time when many argue we are already failing to prepare a large number of young people, especially those from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, for the jobs that exist today. Many of our schools exhibit declining student achievement, overcrowded classrooms, outdated technology, buildings in need of repair, violence, and low teacher and student morale. With declining federal, state, and local revenues, many school districts are in some sort of fiscal jeopardy. These factors and the public's growing frustration and impatience with the progress of school reform all combine to create a sense of urgency for educators and families alike regarding the future of public education.

A growing number of citizens and educators believe that any workable solution to the problems facing education must include a re-conceptualization of the ways schools work with families and communities. Family involvement in the education of children is known to be critical for effective schooling. Collaboration between schools and homes has repeatedly been found to improve students' achievement, attitudes toward learning, and self-esteem. School-home partnerships benefit not only students, but families, schools and teachers.

But collaboration between schools and homes in the past has been impeded by outmoded and inadequate definitions of parent involvement; uncertainty about how to initiate, support, and sustain family-school partnerships; and, most importantly, a failure to foster the attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary for successful collaboration in all relevant participants--educators as well as families. No amount of programs to "bring the school to the community," and no amount of investment in supportive materials and equipment can bring about home-school partnerships if educators are not prepared to initiate and support those partnerships. And if educators are to learn what they need to know to involve and work with families, their preparation must be based on a clear vision and definition of family-school partnerships.

The Meaning and the Mission

A lack of common understanding about the meaning of family involvement has continued to be a major impediment to collaboration between families and educators. In the past, the term "parent involvement" implied efforts by educators to make inactive parents more interested in the functioning of the school and in the achievement of their children. Stereotypical images of parent involvement included mothers contributing to bake sales and fathers participating in booster clubs. Involvement of parents in teaching and learning, in advocacy for students, and in governance and decision-making were not part of the earlier picture. With this limited view of family-school connections, it is not surprising that few schools allotted significant time and resources to parent involvement, few states included the topic in their credentialing requirements, and few colleges and universities addressed educator preparation in this area in any significant way.

Newer images and use of the term "family involvement" have recognized the importance of seeking and acknowledging the inclusion of a broader range of family members, caretakers, and students themselves in the "home" side of the relationship. Yet there continues to be lack of consensus about the roles of both educators and families in educational partnerships. Many definitions of family involvement in the 1990's continue to place more focus on what parents (and not educators) "ought" to do and how schools should remediate deficiencies in parents' (and not educators') preparation for varied partnership roles. In addition, when family involvement is specified as a separate role that educators should perform, collaboration with families tends to become separated from day-to-day educational activities of the school, leading to the compartmentalization (and sometimes marginalization) of this role.

The use of the term "family-school partnerships" in this document signifies a broader conception of the many ways both families and educators need to work together on issues that are significant in the education of students.[1] The expanded role definitions exemplified in the partnership model to be described are founded on the premise that there needs to be collaboration and complementarity in *all* the roles that families and educators play in relation to students' education. Moreover, educators as well as parents need to be effectively prepared to carry out this broader range of collaborative roles.

Preparation for Partnerships

The changing view of family involvement has resulted, in part, from greater knowledge about the varied ways home-school collaborations support children's development and success both in school and in life. Not only has recent research established a foundation for more informed partnership initiatives by educators, it has also made more visible the responsibility of schools and districts in creating congruent policy, structures, and practices that support educators' efforts to initiate and sustain home-school partnerships.

Surprisingly, despite two decades of intense study of family-school partnerships, attention has only recently turned to the preparation of educators in the family involvement area. It seems obvious that a re-conceptualization of the role of schools in creating partnerships with families and communities should impact the entire sequence of educator preparation, support, and evaluation. Assembly Bill 1264 (Martinez, 1993) was sponsored, in part, to remedy this oversight by requiring the Commission to review all of its standards for educators, and to adopt standards that enhance family-school collaboration. To set the stage for the recommendations of the Assembly Bill 1264 Task Force, this paper reviews current training and credentialing standards in the area of family involvement, and discusses various new frameworks and recommendations in terms of the ways they address the preparation of educators for collaborating with families.

Background Information

Legislative Mandate

Assembly Bill 1264 (Martinez, 1993) was signed into law by Governor Pete Wilson on October 2, 1993. The law requires the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing to adopt standards and requirements that emphasize the preparation of prospective teachers and other certificated educators to serve as active partners with parents and guardians in the education of students. Standards for professional preparation developed as a result of AB 1264 must address the roles of parents and guardians in the educational process, strategies for involving and working with parents and guardians, and the changing conditions of childhood and adolescence, including but not limited to changing family structures and ethnic and cultural diversity.

AB 1264 specifically addresses the issuance and renewal of credentials for the following school personnel.

- Classroom Teachers
- School Counselors
- School Social Workers
- School Nurses
- School Librarians
- Bilingual and Special Education Teachers
- School Psychologists
- Child Welfare and Attendance Workers
- Clinical Rehabilitation Specialists
- School Principals and Other Administrators

AB 1264 requires that the adoption of requirements and standards for *teacher* preparation programs take place in the context of the larger review of teaching credential requirements called for in Senate Bill 1422 (Bergeson). SB 1422 directed the Commission to review all of the standards and requirements for earning and renewing Multiple and Single Subject Teaching Credentials.

Responding to the AB 1264 Legislation

To launch the effort to improve the preparation of California educators to work with families, the California Department of Education, in cooperation with the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, convened groups of educators and community members to attend one-day discussions in August and December 1993. At these meetings, which began before the passage and signing of the Martinez legislation, current standards for various credentials were reviewed and critical issues were identified relating to the preparation of educators for family-school partnerships. Participants heard about other new legislation affecting educator credentialing, and they shared information about efforts around California to improve preparation for family-school partnerships. Subgroups discussed and generated suggestions for new standards in the area of educator preparation for family involvement.

Following these preliminary information-gathering and brainstorming meetings and the eventual passage and signing of AB 1264 in the Fall of 1993, a task force was formally constituted by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Participants were selected for the 1264 Task Force because they were well-informed and experienced in areas relevant to the preparation of various types of educators for partnerships with families. The Task Force included representatives from postsecondary education institutions, school districts, parent and educational organizations, and employee associations. The charge to the group was to explore issues and formulate recommendations that would respond to the requirements of the Martinez legislation.

Material from the 1993 meetings and from the report of the *Policy Forum on Teacher Preparation, Induction and Development for the 21st Century* (June 1994) was used to generate a draft paper. Successive revisions and elaborations of this paper stimulated discussions among the Task Force members in meetings that occurred between February 1995 and April 1996.

Special attention was paid during the meetings of the Task Force to different definitions of family involvement. In addition, members spent considerable time struggling with the notion of a continuum of knowledge and skills about parent involvement that could provide the focus for educator preparation activities and could help specify desired outcomes in the area of family involvement at various stages of educators' professional lives.

Relevant Research on Family Involvement and Educational Reform

Why Involve Families?

There is extensive evidence that family involvement in the education of children is critical to effective schooling. Research such as that reviewed by Swap (1993) and by Henderson and her colleagues (1981, 1987, 1994) shows that family involvement improves student achievement, attitudes toward learning, and self esteem. Schools that undertake and support strong comprehensive family involvement efforts and have strong linkages with the communities they serve are more likely to produce students who perform better than identical schools that do not involve families. Children from low-income and culturally and racially diverse families experience greater success when schools involve families, enlist them as allies, and build on their strengths. Family involvement in a child's education is a more important factor in student success than family income or education.

Collaborative partnerships with parents have been shown to benefit families, schools, and teachers in addition to students. As a result of such partnerships, for example, families better understand the work of schools, have more confidence in schools, and often enroll in continuing education to advance their own learning. The teachers that parents work with have higher opinions of such families and higher expectations for their children, which leads to increased achievement. Schools that work well with families have better teacher morale, higher ratings of teachers by parents, and better reputations and linkages to resources in the community (Epstein & Dauber, 1991; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Swap, 1993).

How Different Types of Partnerships Relate to Various Outcomes

Epstein (1995) has shown that efforts to bring together families and schools are most successful if they are multifaceted and support various types of involvement. The characteristics, requirements, associated barriers, and outcomes of each type of involvement are different. Thus, no one practice can cover the full range of ways students, parents, and educators can work together to achieve the goals of education. For example, parent volunteers in the classroom can help students improve the skills being taught, and can help teachers think more positively about parents and their abilities. But this type of involvement does not help *other* parents know how to help their own children with schoolwork, or how to change those children's concepts of their parents.

Implementation of some types of partnerships can also impact the frequency of others. For example, teachers who use parent volunteers often end up being more willing to involve parents in other ways. And teachers who believe in their ability to involve

parents initiate more communication with parents than do teachers who just believe in their ability to teach well (Ames, de Stefano, Watkins, & Sheldon, 1995). Moreover, successful involvement activities by one teacher can influence others to use the same practices (Epstein & Dauber, 1991).

Family-school partnership activities also need to look different at the elementary, middle and high school levels. Not only do adolescents' needs and abilities differ from those of younger students, their relationships with family members and educators change as they mature. The failure to include older students in home school activities may partially account for the dramatic decline in working partnerships as students move through the grades.

Henderson and Berla (1994) found three themes related to the breadth of family involvement activities emerging from the research they surveyed:

- Children do best when parents are enabled to play a variety of roles in their children's learning: teachers, supporters, advocates, and decision-makers;
- The more the relationship between family and school approaches a comprehensive, well-planned partnership encompassing these different roles, the better students achieve; and
- Families, schools and community organizations all contribute to student achievement; the best results come when all three work together.

Later, this report will elaborate the various ways families may be partners with schools, and will indicate that partnership roles should not be construed too narrowly and that educators have complementary roles to each of those defined for families.

The various types of partnership roles parents may assume will be described in more detail in a later section, where it will be pointed out that roles must not be construed too narrowly and that educators have complementary to each of those defined for families.

Why Educators Must Take the Initiative in Supporting Family Participation

Educators need to view partnerships with families as an integral part of good teaching and student success. Family involvement in the education of their children is in part an issue of access and equity. Children whose families know how to "navigate the system" and advocate effectively on their behalf tend to experience more success in their education than children whose families are uninvolved in their education. Most families need help in learning how to be productively involved in their children's education at each grade level, especially at transition points between elementary, middle, and high school. School programs and educator practices to organize family and school connections are "equalizers" to help families who would not become involved on their own (Epstein & Dauber, 1991). The benefits of developing collaborative relationships with all families are many, and they accrue to educators, families, and students.

How Well Recognized Are the Benefits of Family Involvement?

The importance of family involvement has been emphasized in every national educational report over the past two decades, and the concept has been endorsed by numerous political and educational associations, such as the National Governor's Association, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and the National Association of School Boards of Education. Moreover, one of the National Educational Goals states that by the year 2000, every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children. National polls indicate that over 90 percent of teachers at all grade levels want more home-school interaction (Gallup, 1989), and teachers view the strengthening of parents' roles as an issue of the highest priority (Louis Harris and Associates, 1993). Similarly, 40 percent of parents believe they are not devoting enough time to their children's education (Finney, 1993), and 80 percent of parents are willing to spend one evening a month learning how to improve their children's behavior and interest in schoolwork (NEA, 1981).

Improving Family-School Partnerships

What Has Been Done to Enhance Family Involvement in California's Schools?

Over the past twenty years the California Department of Education has encouraged and supported greater parent participation in K-12 education through its own initiatives and its support of key state and federal legislation. These efforts have produced the following results:

- Schools that participate in the School Improvement Program (AB 65, Statutes of 1977) must establish school site councils made up of equal numbers of school staff and parents to make decisions about the school program.
- A State Policy on Parent Involvement adopted by the State Board of Education in 1989 and revised in 1994 recommends that each school site undertake a comprehensive home-school partnership effort based on various roles that parents can play in their children's education.
- Current state law (AB 322, Statute of 1990) requires every school board to adopt a policy on parent involvement and to develop school level plans if their district receives School Improvement, EIA, and Title I funds.
- Major CDE school reform initiatives such as school restructuring (SB 1274, Statutes of 1990), the elementary, middle, and high school level reform efforts, Every Student Succeeds (ESS), Healthy Start (SB 620, Statutes of 1991), and the Challenge District Reform Initiative, identify parent involvement as a key component to school success for students.

- The Improving America's Schools Act (IASA) of 1994, which re-authorized federal Title I programs such as Even Start, Migrant Education, American Indian Education, and Bilingual Education, requires all schools that receive funds to develop family-school compacts and adopt parent involvement policies at the school site and district levels.
- The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and California Master Plan for Special Education require and promote parental involvement utilizing an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).
- The review processes that all elementary and secondary schools in California undergo periodically to determine the quality and effectiveness of their programs specify that the quality of family-school collaborative efforts be evaluated. (Program Quality Review (PQR) at the elementary level and Focus on Learning at the secondary level).
- The California Strategic Plan for Parental Involvement in Education, developed and published by the CDE in 1992, includes recommendations for transforming schools through family-community-school partnerships.
- The Family-School Partnership Act (AB 2450, Statutes of 1995) allows parents to take time off from work to participate in their children's schools.
- Parent involvement is one of the criteria that is used to identify distinguished schools in the California School Recognition Program. Schools must describe the strategies and activities they use to ensure that parents are collaborative partners in the education of their children.

Although a strong infrastructure exists in California to support active family-school partnerships, there is a substantial gap between the widespread consensus for collaboration and the reality in schools on a day to day basis. To help bridge this gap, attention must be paid to the preparation of educators for partnership.

Why School Reform and Family Involvement Need to Be Linked

Many evaluations of family involvement programs have shown gains in student achievement only during the period of the innovation. Henderson (1987) suggests that, in many cases, long-term structural modifications are not made in schools to maintain those gains for subsequent students. However, when parent involvement programs are integrated with comprehensive plans for school improvement, as, for example, in the Comer model (Comer, 1988), students in even poor inner city schools can continue to sustain achievement gains that reach or surpass the national average.

Swap (1993) suggests that the norms in most schools today do not support partnerships. She cites Noddings' (1988) description of traditional school management as emphasizing hierarchy and individualism rather than dialogue, relationship, and

reciprocity. And she argues that such norms have led American schools to a model where parents delegate the job of education to the school and educators see parent involvement as interference with their jobs or as potentially threatening and unpleasant. In addition, when insufficient resources of time and money are allocated to building home-school relationships, discussion of important issues by families and schools does not occur until a crisis emerges when emotions are strong and solutions are not simple.

In many recent efforts to reform schools, traditional boundaries, processes, and outcomes have been successfully redefined to include families. In schools attempting to build "learning organizations" attention is focused on improving the quality of thinking, the capacity for reflection and team learning, and the ability to develop shared visions and shared understandings of complex issues (Fullan, 1993). Principals and other administrators in learning organizations manage by values and results, not by programs or tight supervision. They cause others to decide by orchestrating, coaching, and encouraging; they lead through teaching; and they express visions and assess results (Fullan, 1993; Schlechty, 1991). Teachers in such schools focus not only on making a difference with individual students and on school-wide changes that help all students learn, but they look for opportunities to join forces with other educators, parents, students, and community representatives. If educators are to work in structures that include wider partnerships and seek new ideas both inside and outside the school setting, all members of these learning communities need habits and skills of collaboration and of continuous inquiry and learning.

Why Changes Are Needed in Standards and Requirements for Educators

Despite the widespread endorsement of family-school partnerships to support student learning, most educators in the United States have received little or no training on how to work effectively with families. Surveys of teacher educators, teachers, and administrators (Chavkin and Williams, 1988), evaluations of current professional education programs (Powell, 1991; Shartrand, Kreider, & Erickson-Warfield, 1994), and content analyses of certification tests in states which have them (Greenwood and Hankins, 1989), all support the conclusion that programs for prospective teachers neither provide student teachers with information and supervised experiences in working with families, nor expect them to demonstrate relevant competencies and skills for certification.

Shartrand and her colleagues (1994) found that only 22 states mention parent involvement in certification requirements for teachers, and those that do have such requirements rarely define parent involvement in clear precise terms. This topic significantly more often appears with regard to the training of early childhood teachers as opposed to K-12 educators. Radcliffe, Malone, and Nathan (1994) found that only 7 states require prospective administrators to take a class or do something else to develop skill in the area of parent involvement. Even in special education, where more attention is paid to parent involvement, only 26 states (including California) have explicit parent involvement preparation requirements.

According to the Harvard Family Research Group study (Shartrand et al., 1994) training that exists is often traditional in definition, teaching methods, and delivery. The type of parent involvement most often addressed in courses is home-school communication with topics such as parent-teacher conferencing. Preservice teachers encounter this content most frequently in class discussions or in required reading rather than via experiential learning. Yet it is personal contacts and experiences that have an impact on teachers' attitudes and beliefs.

Most teachers report feeling they need more instruction on how to work with parents. For example, almost half of the educators in a recent study by Nathan and Radcliffe (1994) rated their teacher/administrator preparation programs as "not at all effective" in preparing them to work closely with parents. Moreover, the experiences teachers reported having as part of their professional preparation were not the ones that principals said were important for family involvement (Chavkin & Williams, 1988). In December 1992, *Education Week* reported that only one quarter of the new public school teachers surveyed by Louis Harris & Associates rated their experience with parents as satisfying and 40% of respondents said they planned to leave the profession, citing "a lack of parental support and cooperation" as the primary reason for contemplating such a move.

There is evidence that past attitudes, expectations, and actions of educators have contributed to a lack of success of family involvement in many schools. For example, Davies (1988) found that teachers sometimes complain that families are hard to reach, but either do not try to involve them or lack knowledge about ways to overcome barriers of culture, class, or language. Some educators mistakenly believe that poor or less-educated parents do not care about the schooling of their children, that they are ignorant of their children's cognitive needs, and that they will not respond to efforts to involve them (Johnson, Brookover, & Farrell, 1989; Lightfoot, 1980; McLaughlin & Shields, 1987). Traditional school-home communication has tended to be formal, one-way, and too often focused on negative information.

As the potential benefits of family involvement have become more apparent, federal and state policy makers have tried to encourage more comprehensive roles for parents in education by mandating specific forms of parent involvement. However, policy makers have begun to realize that regulations cannot transform schools; only teachers, in collaboration with parents and administrators can do that. Thus, there is now more concern that effort be invested in the preparation and professional development of teachers and other educators. As Joyce Epstein (1989) has said, "Of all problems that prevent educators from moving from rhetoric about parent involvement to practice, none is more serious than the lack of teacher and administrator training in this topic" (p. 7). Moreover, paying attention to initial credentialing now makes sense given the fact that fully half of the teachers who will be teaching in the year 2005 will be hired over the next decade (Darling-Hammond, 1996).

Shartrand et al. (1994) suggest that stronger preservice preparation programs include more courses that address the various types of parent involvement, experiential

learning opportunities, and integration of the parent involvement theme throughout the curriculum. Epstein and Scott-Jones (1988) also recommend study of family structures, cultures, and processes, and of alternative ways comprehensive programs can be developed in schools and classrooms. During two SB 1422 regional network forums in the San Francisco Bay Area, participants suggested that teachers need to be aware of the importance of home-school connections; to acquire communication skills, especially those useful in adult education, conflict resolution, and counseling; to learn practical management skills for coordinating activities involving parent and community volunteers; and, most importantly, to develop a strong background in multicultural issues.

Research regarding staff development also gives us guidelines about what effective efforts to enhance existing educators' knowledge and skills in family involvement might look like. Kirst, Hayward, and Koppich (1995) and Darling-Hammond (1996) assert that effective staff development is school-based, ongoing, connected to what is going on in classrooms, and involves educators, especially teachers, as key planners and leaders. Educators must join forces with parents, students and others because they are part of a larger renewal process to create "learning communities" (Fullan, 1993). Efforts by educators to gain new partnership knowledge and skills must also involve direct contact with families.

Clearly, national, state, district and school policies on family involvement cannot be implemented effectively unless all educators have the commitment, knowledge, and skills to do so. It is relevant, then, to ask about the quantity and quality of preparation for family involvement in programs of professional preparation, induction, and professional development of California educators. It is also important to examine the extent to which efforts to improve standards for educator preparation, licensing, and certification in California and across the country have included a consideration of ways to enhance family-school collaboration.

Educator Preparation for Family Involvement

National Teaching Standards-Setting Initiatives

Across the country important initiatives are underway to develop more meaningful standards for teaching, more authentic assessments for teachers, and national standards for teacher education, licensing, and certification. The most well-known efforts are those of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Originally these standards did not include much emphasis on competencies in the area of family involvement. However, with lobbying from the National PTA and the publishing of the Shartrand et al. (1994) study, these national initiatives and the Goals 2000 legislation have added parent involvement to their guidelines.

There are a number of commonalties in the types of competencies, knowledge, and skills related to family-school partnerships targeted in these frameworks. To make it easier to assess similarities and differences, Chrispeels (1996) has charted indicators and standards of quality parent-teacher relations from California's BTSA Framework and two national sets of teaching standards from INTASC and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Table 2 displays an adaptation of Chrispeels' organization of this information.

There are three general categories of knowledge and skills having to do with family-community involvement that are represented in these frameworks.

- Ability to design and implement learning experiences for diverse student populations;
- Competence in assessing the learning of students and communicating with families about that learning; and
- Continuous development as a professional educator.

Despite these similarities, there do seem to be subtle differences among these frameworks in the cited competencies related to family-school partnerships. One contrast has to do with the degree to which input from families about instruction, assessment, and teacher performance is emphasized. The wording of the starred quality under principle 8 of the INTASC standards is much more explicit about establishing a two-way relationship with families regarding individual students' progress in school. Both the INTASC and NBPTS are also more detailed in their description of what is meant by adapting curriculum and teaching to all students and making it clear that such adjustments should be connected not just to the learning of generalizations about populations but the acquisition of understanding about particular students and communities. A third contrast relates to the way professional development is introduced and described. The NBPTS standards talk about teachers as members of learning communities rather than talking about growth as a professional. Not only does this terminology seem to imply more solidarity and less role differentiation in relation to families, but the qualities and behaviors listed under Proposition 5 in this third column confirm this more collaborative image of teachers.

These frameworks provide a starting place in working toward meaningful and reasonable standards for teachers in the family involvement area. However, a more comprehensive look needs to be taken at these standards and those for other certificated personnel to determine their adequacy from the perspective of an overall model of family-school partnership and from the viewpoint of what we know about how educator knowledge and skill in this area develops. Moreover, we need more information about how best to translate expectations and desired outcomes for educators in the family involvement area into actual educator preparation curriculum and activities. The following project in California has sought to provide some insights about this implementation question.

Table 2. Indicators of Quality Parent-Teacher Relations from the Interstate Model Standards for Beginning Teachers, the California Framework of Expectations for Beginning Teachers, and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

Council of Chief State School Officers Model Teaching Standards (INTASC)	Draft Framework of Knowledge, Skills and Abilities for Beginning Teachers in California (BTSA)	National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)
Principle #3: *The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.* • The teacher seeks to understand, know and be sensitive to students' families, cultures, and communities and then uses this knowledge to enrich the curriculum and connect instruction to the students' experiences, families, and culture. Principal #7: *The teacher plans instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community and curriculum goals.* • The teacher knows about community resources and is able to integrate them and the students' experiences into the curriculum.	Domain 3: *Plan instruction and design learning experiences for all students.* • Valuing and drawing upon student diversity in planning instruction. *Questions:* • how acquire relevant knowledge about communities • how engage in culturally sensitive dialogue with families • how develop understanding of multiple perspectives in the school community Domain 4: *Engage all students in powerful learning* • Identifying and addressing multiple backgrounds of all learners.	Proposition #1: *Teachers are committed to students and their learning* • Teachers recognize individual differences in their students and acquire a deep understanding of them and the communities from which they come. • Teachers recognize how intelligence is culturally defined and will capitalize on and enlarge the repertoires of learning and thinking that students bring to school
Principal #8: *The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social and physical development of the learner.* • Teachers are to solicit and use information about students' experiences, learning behavior, needs and progress from parents, other colleagues and the students themselves and to maintain useful records that can be shared with students, parents and other colleagues.	Domain 5: *Assess student learning* • Establishing appropriate learning expectations for all students. • Involving students in assessing their own work. • Collecting and using multiple sources of information about students and their work. *Question:* • how work with families to understand students and their accomplishments • Communicating with students, parents, and other audiences about student progress.	Proposition #3: *Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.* • Accomplished teachers know how to mobilize students to tutor their peers and how to engage aides and volunteers as teaching assistants. • Teachers are able to provide constructive feedback to students, parents and themselves and encourage student self assessment.
Principal #9: *The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.* [No specific points made] Principal #10: *The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students' learning and well-being.* • The teacher understands that the school exists within the larger community and understands how factors in the students' environment outside of school may influence the students' life and learning. • Teacher consults with others, including parents and other professionals on behalf of students. • The teacher can identify and use community resources to foster student learning. • The teacher establishes respectful and productive relationships with parents and guardians from diverse home and community situations, and seeks to develop cooperative partnerships in support of student learning and well-being	Domain 6: *Develop as a professional to improve teaching and learning* • Involving families and community members in student learning. *Questions:* • how promote dialogue and interactions with families and community members • how identify and use school and community resources to benefit students and their families • how use parent in the classroom • how enhance collaboration between school and community • how respond to family and community concerns about student progress • how increase their understanding of the cultural norms and dynamics of the community • reflecting on teaching and learning	Proposition #4: *Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.* • Teachers are willing to solicit feedback about their teaching from peers, students and parents. Proposition #5: *Teachers are members of learning communities.* • Teachers work collaboratively with others to improve the effectiveness of the school and engage parents and others in the community in the education of young people. • Teachers are willing to serve on school or district committees. • Teachers work collaboratively with parents communicating regularly, listening to parental concerns, respecting their perspectives, enlisting their support in fostering learning and good habits, educating parents about school programs and sharing student progress. • Teachers are alert to differences among families and tailor their practices accordingly to enhance student achievement. • Accomplished teachers are able to "avoid traditional pitfalls and work to foster collaborative relationships between school and family." • Teachers are able to take advantage of community resources to support learning. • Teachers cultivate knowledge about the character of the community and its effects on the school and students, appreciating the ethnic and linguistic differences and cultural influences on students' aspirations and expectations and of the effects of poverty and affluence.

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The California Project to Enhance Teacher Preparation for Parent Involvement

Starting in 1989, the Joint Subcommittee on Parent Involvement of the University of California and the California Department of Education launched a collaborative project with teacher educators in UC schools and departments of education. Two conferences were held to provide UC teacher educators with research and practice-based background information and to stimulate thinking about how relevant information and experiences could be provided to students in UC teacher education programs. Teams of teacher educators generated ideas to improve preservice preparation for family involvement and subsequently tried out these strategies on their own campuses. After a number of discussions of the pilot efforts, a subgroup of six teacher educators from UC and CSU decided to share successes and insights by writing and distributing a set of case reports of their efforts. The volume entitled *Joining Hands: Preparing Teachers to Make Meaningful Home-School Connections* will be published in 1996 by the California Department of Education, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, the University of California, and the Intersegmental Coordinating Committee. Themes illustrated by the case reports (Ammon, forthcoming) include the following:

- Parent involvement must go to the heart of basic education--the teaching of curriculum and day-to-day interacting with children and families about learning.
- Preservice teacher education should give priority to impacting teachers' personal awareness of themselves and the way their perspectives differ from those of students and their parents.
- Teacher education needs to recognize and respond to the disparities in beginning teachers' readiness for connecting with families.
- Teacher education programs can provide for differences in teachers' expertise and needs by building family involvement opportunities into many program components and by offering multiple activity alternatives.
- Student teachers need to be actively engaged in parent involvement, to explore their own ways of doing things, to receive feedback from peers and supervisors, and to reflect on these activities--not just hear about strategies and techniques others have used.
- Assessment of preparation for parent involvement should involve evaluation of both the thinking and actions of student teachers.

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Directions for Improvement in Educator Partnership Preparation

Awareness of the need for improvement in the preparation of educators for family involvement has prompted increased debate about what the goals and forms of partnership preparation should be. We have described general recommendations derived from research and practice, and have outlined efforts at the state and national level to specify aspects of family involvement knowledge and skills in frameworks and standards for educator competence. Beginning efforts of teacher educators to develop meaningful partnership preparation components have provided additional insights. All of these activities have contributed to the vision of the qualities that should characterize educational professionals and of the direction that future preservice and inservice educational efforts should take.

Suggestions for Educator Outcomes

If schools are to implement partnerships with families and communities so that all students can succeed, the AB 1264 Task Force believes that educators must:

- Be aware of the importance of home-school connections and be committed to the concept of partnerships with the families of all children;
- Be able to think systematically about their family involvement attitudes and practices and learn from their experiences;
- Understand the goals and benefits of different types of family involvement, as well as the barriers to their implementation.
- Be aware of the way cultural assumptions and life experiences influence interpretation of events and respect the beliefs, values, opinions, lifestyles, and childrearing practices of all families;
- Be able to build on the strengths of family diversity in the classroom, at the school site, and in the home;
- Be able to work collaboratively with each other, with other professionals, and with families and students to develop a common vision of partnership; and
- Be willing to assume responsibility for initiating, supporting, rewarding and monitoring various types of partnership activities, ensuring access for all parents and respecting all types and levels of participation.

This outcomes-based approach to educator preparation reflects what we know about the interconnected roles of the school, family, and community in children's learning and development, about the necessity for taking account of the values and attitudes of educators, students and the community served, and about the need for educators to

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acquire both knowledge about and direct practice with families and communities. The underlying goal of this approach is to encourage the implementation of innovative, responsive and flexible programs that can prepare educators for family-school partnerships in a changing world.

Qualities of Effective School-Family Partnerships

Though there is much yet to be learned about preparation for school-family collaboration, the AB 1264 Task Force believes that new standards for educators that adequately address family involvement should be influenced by a model of partnership that has four qualities. Effective school-family partnerships are:

- Comprehensive,
- Collaborative,
- Connected to teaching and learning, and
- Continuously developing.

Comprehensive Family-School-Community Partnerships

Accomplished educators use all available resources to create optimal learning environments. This includes enlisting the active participation of parents and families in a variety of ways. Comprehensive family involvement partnerships that support the intellectual, social, physical, and emotional development of children have the following features:

- They provide opportunities for educators to learn more about families and help families support their children as students and meet their basic parenting obligations;
- They ensure systematic two-way communication (school-home, home-school) about the school, programs, and student progress;
- They train educators and families to work together so that families can fulfill a wide range of support and resource roles;
- They provide educators and families with strategies and techniques for connecting children and learning activities at home and in the community with learning at school;
- They prepare educators and families to actively participate in school decision-making and governance and develop their leadership and advocacy skills; and
- They help educators and families identify, access, and contribute to community and support services that strengthen school programs, family practices and student learning and development.

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Collaborative Partnerships of Families and Educators

Collaboration between educators and families means that families and educators work in mutually respectful and collaborative ways in order to ensure each child's positive school experience and school success. Such partnerships are predicated on:

- The recognition that both families and educators have essential roles to play.
- A sensitivity to diversity and different paths to common goals.
- The need for relationships that continue yet change appropriately across children's years of schooling.

Meaningful collaboration between families and educators requires the recognition not only of individual developmental and dispositional differences among students and parents, but among educators as well. Collaboration cannot be based on broad generalizations, but must be contextualized to particular schools and communities, to the needs, interests, and experiences of particular educators, students, and families, and to the structure and resources of particular schools. This view implies that partnerships must be jointly constructed by the participants, not copied from a pattern. It also suggests that visions of partnership must continually evolve as the constituent members change.

Partnership Activities Connected to Teaching and Learning

Family involvement must be seen as part of the basic activity of education carried out by all educators. It cannot be viewed as a public relations activity in which families and communities are told about student progress or problems or are informed of school decisions after the fact. It cannot focus exclusively on extracurricular activities, fundraising efforts, or even the meeting of parents' personal needs. Instead, family-school partnerships must have at their core a connection to curriculum planning and delivery, to the motivation, support, and assessment of student learning, and to the day to day management of interactions with students. This educational grounding for partnership activities is the fuel that will give the efforts of both educators and family members long-lasting energy, since this is the basic concern of both partners. To some extent, the broadening of all basic domains of professional expertise to include collaboration is simply an extension of a more contextualized, highly developed view of teaching and learning. Just as more knowledgeable and experienced teachers are able to integrate instruction in different curricular areas and make it sensitive to individual differences, so educators need to consider family context as one of many factors to consider in planning instruction and educational interactions. Just as documenting the progress of children is part of good teaching, sharing this information with families and inviting them to contribute to this picture extends and enriches this evaluation function.

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Continuous Development of Partnership Abilities

Expertise in actualizing multifaceted partnerships with families and communities cannot be developed by educators taking a course on family involvement or even completing an entire preservice program that affords multiple opportunities for the building of partnership knowledge and skills. Similarly, educators will not necessarily gain insights into how to collaborate with families by being presented with concrete situations in their professional lives that require or allow collaborative interaction. Therefore, a concerted effort to prepare educators to work with families must extend across the entire continuum that includes the recruitment of educator candidates and their undergraduate preparation, the preparation of candidates to begin practice, the induction of new members into the profession, and the pursuit of lifelong professional development. Continued input and discussion, personal experiences and effort, and individual and joint reflection with others are needed for educators to achieve a high level of accomplishment in this area.

Educator preparation for family involvement must be developed through a variety of activities, with an approach that is integrated, recursive and sensitive to individual differences. Working effectively with families should be incorporated in instruction focused on theory and curriculum as well as on field experiences. It is expected that educators' thinking and skills related to family involvement should develop with experience, becoming more comprehensive in terms of the types of activities undertaken, becoming more integrated with other aspects of teaching, becoming more long-term and collaborative, and becoming more contextualized to individual school communities.

What does it really mean for schools and families to collaborate effectively? What do participants in this partnership need to do in order to be effective? The next section of this paper presents concrete examples of the ways families and schools can work collaboratively together to enhance the achievement of students. This framework of activities establishes not only a picture of the many ways family-school partnerships might be actualized, but provides more detail about specific expectations for educators and situations that might be used to help educators develop and refine their partnership skills.

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A Framework of Family-Educator Partnership Possibilities

Effective family involvement efforts are comprehensive with respect to the six types of involvement described earlier. However, in practice, the six types overlap significantly. Each of the types of involvement also implies a range of activities. The following examples illustrate possible collaborative activities that families and educators might undertake. Although the activities in the two columns appear to be discrete and role-specific, they are intended to be mutually supportive and well-integrated. Finally, though schools have an obligation to provide families with a full range of ways such as these in which to participate, it should not be assumed that a family must take part in all these types of activities or fulfill all roles in order to be considered an adequate partner. There is also no hierarchy of better forms of participation. Thus, for example, parent participation at school and participation in policy-making roles are important ways, but not *better* ways for families to participate.

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Increasing Knowledge about Families and Parenting

1. Family-educator partnerships provide learning opportunities for educators to meet their basic obligation to work effectively with families and for families to meet their basic parenting obligations.

Educators Can:	Families Can:
• Value families and the role they play in education. • Actively learn about families and the community to better understand student needs, family life, interests and talents, e.g., in conferences, home visits, meetings, community events. • Respect and understand diversity of background and cultures of families. • Provide workshops for school staff to learn how to communicate and work effectively with all families. • Collaborate with families and the community to ensure a positive school climate and to develop preventive discipline strategies. • Provide information through workshops, videotapes, phone hotlines, newsletters, etc. to assist families in their parenting role. • Link families to community agencies to help them meet basic needs--nutrition, health, counseling, etc. • Provide opportunities for families to become more involved in the types of activities listed in column two.	• Value education and educators and convey that value to children. • Provide for children's health, safety and welfare. • Engage in parenting practices that develop positive self-esteem and enhance children's well-being. • Engage in, lead and support the development of school policy. • Contribute to the development and support of and participation in workshops that help increase parent effectiveness. • Create a home environment that supports learning. • Develop/participate in training that helps families participate more actively in school and advocate effectively for their child. • Actively reach out and establish connections with the school, teachers, other parents, and programs. • Develop/participate in activities that inform educators about the needs, interests, and talents of families.

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Improving Two-Way Communication

2. Family-educator partnerships ensure systematic two-way communication (school-home, home-school) about the school, school programs and students' progress.

Educators Can:	Families Can:
• Establish mechanisms to facilitate active family-school partnerships to develop school goals, policies and programs. • Communicate school goals, expectations, policies, procedures, courses, programs, and opportunities for participation. • In collaboration with parents, develop comprehensive, frequent, and regular two-way communication systems in the home languages of families, such as, - parent-teacher conferences for goal setting and sharing progress. - progress reports or weekly/monthly folders that invite evaluations from family, student and other educators. - formal/informal gatherings to share information and build partnerships. - regular information on instructional programs and how families can help. - family-school compacts identify how the school and the family will contribute to a child's success in school. - periodic parent satisfaction/interest surveys to solicit parent input. - newsletters with tear-off and return sections to solicit input and feedback. - telephone trees and phone calls. - videos and voice mail systems. - home and community visits. - parent centers. - a welcoming climate and open door to parents at school. - interpreters for non-English speakers. • Assess opportunities for and barriers to two-way communication between school and home and the frequency of positive and personal contacts. • Provide inservice training and activities that address and improve school-home communication.	• Share family expectations and goals for the child and school. • Provide input into school programs, policies and procedures. • Share information about family/child needs and concerns. • Provide information about family members skills, knowledge and expertise that can assist the school. • Share positive responses and concerns with school personnel (e.g., use tear-off sections of school news-letters and bulletins.) • Invite teachers and administrators to visit homes of families. • Organize neighborhood meetings with administrators and teachers. • Respond to school notes and initiate own contacts. • Assess opportunities for and barriers to two way communication between school and home. • Assist with inservice training or education and other activities that address and improve school-home communication. • Act as an advocate for children on school matters. • Help to establish parent centers at the school or community that promote communication between the home and school. • Support family-school compacts that identify how the family and school will work together to help a student succeed.

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Fulfilling Support and Resource Roles

3. Family-educator partnerships train educators and families to work together so that families can fulfill a wide range of support and resource roles.

Educators Can:	Families Can:
• Welcome families in school (welcome signs in appropriate languages, friendly front office staff, and organized volunteer programs). • In collaboration with families, identify school and student needs and goals so that school staff and families can contribute productively. • Match families' time and skills with needs of teachers and students. • Provide training to families on how to assist in the classroom or in other school programs and activities. • Provide training for educators on how to utilize volunteers. • Provide ways for families to share their cultures, careers and traditions with students and staff. • Support family involvement by recognizing the efforts families are making to be meaningfully involved. • Provide ways for families to support school programs and activities while at home or in the community. • Provide opportunities for families to feel a part of the school and show appreciation for their children and the school through attendance at sports events and performances, fundraising, etc.	• Provide information about the skills, knowledge and expertise of family members or others in the community. • Assist teachers, administrators, and children in classrooms, in the office, library, school yard, field trips, and in community or home-based activities. • Participate in and support meetings, performances, sports events, and fundraising activities. • Act as mentors, career speakers, coaches, tutors, and chaperones. • Share families' cultural heritage with students. • Recognize educator efforts to enlist family participation. • Exchange services with other families such as child care, transportation, and supervision of homework, so that students receive the support they need to succeed. • Participate in the operation of parent centers to provide other families with needed information and services. • Volunteer to participate in activities such as telephone trees or act as classroom parent to provide all families with needed information.

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Connecting Home and School Learning

4. Family-educator partnerships provide educators and families with strategies and techniques for connecting learning activities at home and in the community with learning at school.

Educators Can:	Families Can:
• Collaboratively develop a consistent school-wide homework policy and guidelines. • Inform families about how to monitor, discuss, and help with homework. • Assign interactive, family friendly homework. • Help families become more knowledgeable about curriculum. • Inform families about skills students need in order to pass each grade. • Survey families and students about homework satisfaction, assignments. • Establish after school homework help centers. • Install homework telephone systems or computer web sites with assignments recorded. • Seek information about students' learning activities outside the classroom. • Make connections between childrens' learning and experiences at home with classroom learning. • Incorporate knowledge of students' culture into classroom learning. • Provide curriculum-connected workshops and materials for families at school and in the community (e.g., Family Math, Family Science, Family Reading, Family Computing, Summer Learning Packets, etc.)	• Monitor and assist with homework, i.e., encourage, listen, interact, praise, guide, and discuss the work, with follow-up. • Find out what children are learning and talk over ideas and school decisions. • Engage in other learning activities, such as leisure reading, trips to museums, parks, theater, sports events. • Provide feedback and suggestions to school on quality of homework assignments. • Use tutoring resources to help students having homework problems. • Call the homework hotline or access the computer homework web site if one is available. • Assist educators in curriculum planning and decision-making. • Provide information to educators about children's learning and experiences outside the classroom. • Participate in educator-provided family learning activities at home, at school, and in the community.

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Participating in Decision Making and Governance

5. Family-educator partnerships prepare educators and families to actively participate in school decision making and governance and develop and exercise their leadership and advocacy skills.

Educators Can:	Families Can:
• Participate actively in family-school partnership teams, PTA committees, and groups, in district and state efforts to improve schools, and in reform efforts within professional associations. • Establish mechanisms for and encourage active participation of families in school decision making and governance. • Welcome active participation of families in decision-making and leadership roles. • Provide training to school staff and families in: - how school systems work; - how to gain access to decision-makers; - facilitation and decision making skills; - conflict resolution; - communication; - curriculum, program and budget development; and - personnel selection. • Ensure families from all racial and ethnic groups, socioeconomic levels and geographic communities have opportunities for leadership. • Volunteer to serve as advocates for students in need.	• Participate actively on PTA, school leadership teams, advocacy groups, district advisory councils, federal and state programs, committees and groups, Goals 2000 or other school improvement councils, PQR and WASC accreditation teams, and school reform efforts. • Engage in workshops to enhance their own and other families' leadership skills and knowledge of school programs, curriculum and budgets. • Organize social events to share information with other families and solicit their input. • Organize telephone trees to keep families informed. • Support continuous quality improvement efforts at the school. • Become effective advocates for policies that improve education for all children. • Participate in carrying out phone and written surveys to assess attitudes and solicit the input of other families in decision-making. • Participate in community groups to advocate for schools and their improvement and to provide information about the needs of schools.

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Accessing and Supporting Community Services

6. Family-educator partnerships help educators and families identify, access, and contribute to community and support services that strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development.

Educators Can:	Families Can:
• Work with families to identify and publicize community resources available to families–health, cultural, recreational, social support, etc. • Collaborate with community agencies to provide joint services and/or make resources more accessible to families. • Collaborate with community businesses and agencies to offer before and after school programs and other community learning opportunities for teens. • Work with colleges, universities, businesses, and seniors to identify potential volunteers and tutors. • Provide information on community activities that link to learning skills and talents–summer programs and jobs for students, mentoring, tutoring, etc. • Provide information to students and families about service learning opportunities in the community. • Encourage participation by students and families in service to the community (recycling, food and clothing drives, etc.). • Encourage partnerships of schools with business, civic, cultural, recreational, and social service organizations.	• Work with school officials to identify and publicize community resources available to families and schools. • Volunteer to develop a resource bank that will enrich classroom instructional programs. • Volunteer to use the home as a homework center. • Work with schools to provide community service learning opportunities for teens that will meet community needs. • Volunteer to work with community children and youth groups.

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Advisory Task Force Recommendations

This report is intended to inform the Commission's Comprehensive Review of Teaching Credential Requirements (SB 1422) about the need for and nature of productive family/educator partnerships in education and to contribute suggestions about ways future certificated educators might be better prepared to work effectively with families in the education of students.

Considering the public's growing sense of urgency about improving California's educational system and the overwhelming evidence that multifaceted family-school partnerships can contribute to that improvement, the AB 1264 Task Force recommends that interim steps be taken to inform the field and begin implementing the vision presented in this paper before the completion of the SB 1422 review. Specifically, the Task Force recommends the following strategies and activities:

(1) The charge of AB 1264 focuses primarily on ensuring that the Commission on Teacher Credentialing adopt standards for the preparation of educators that adequately address family involvement. Preparation for family involvement must figure prominently in the professional preparation, induction and ongoing professional development of all educators. Therefore, the AB 1264 Task Force recommends that the Commission adopt the standard found in Appendix A and incorporate it into the *Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Professional Teacher Preparation Programs for Multiple and Single Subject Teaching Credentials.*

(2) The AB 1264 Task Force further recommends that the Commission forward the standard shown in Appendix A to each of its expert Advisory Panels in other credential areas with the expectation that each of these panels will adapt the standard as appropriate to the specific credential area.

(3) The Commission should distribute relevant parts of the Report of the AB 1264 Task Force to the 72 postsecondary education institutions in California with approved teacher preparation programs, to the California State Legislature, to professional educator associations, to the California State PTA, to the CSU Center for Educational Reform, to the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Programs. In addition, the CTC should make the report available to local education agencies and other interested parties upon request.

(4) The Commission on Teacher Credentialing, in consultation with the California Department of Education should sponsor workshops throughout the State for teacher educators, teachers, administrators, other members of the education community, and parents. The workshops should focus on the content of this paper and a forthcoming case studies report entitled Joining Hands: Preparing Teachers to Make Meaningful Home-School Connections. The workshops should be designed to increase awareness of the nature and potential of family-educator

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partnerships, to facilitate the voluntary infusion of this content into teacher education and other educator credentialing programs, and to highlight existing successful educator preparation practices.

(5) The Commission on Teacher Credentialing should hold an informed discussion during 1996 to discuss the work of the AB 1264 Task Force. Institutions and schools with exemplary practice in this area should be highlighted.

(6) As part of its annual Day of the Teacher Celebration, the Commission should recognize teachers who demonstrate exemplary practice in collaborating with families.

(7) The Commission should integrate a more comprehensive vision of family-school collaboration into the Draft Framework of Expectations for Beginning Teachers.

(8) The California Department of Education should continue efforts to make information about effective family-school collaboration practices available through the Internet and other means of communication.

(9) The Commission on Teacher Credentialing, in consultation with the California Department of Education, should jointly convene a Task Force to develop guidelines for professional development focused on enhancing the skills of the existing workforce in the area of family-school collaboration.

(10) The Commission on Teacher Credentialing, with the cooperation of the California Department of Education and the Intersegmental Coordinating Council, should invite a broad cross-section of the education community and professional associations to collaborate on the development of an incentive system for teacher preparation institutions to develop exemplary programs in the area of family-school collaboration.

During 1996, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing carried out Recommendation 5 by conducting the informed discussion that it suggested. In 1997, the Commission adopted policy recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 10 above. Persons who are interested in the work of the Commission on this issue should contact:

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Appendix A

Recommended Standard of Program Quality and Effectiveness for Educator Preparation in Home-School Partnerships

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Recommended Standard

Family Involvement in the Education of Children

Each candidate learns about the full range of ways family-school partnerships can enhance good teaching and support student learning and well-being. Each candidate gains in-depth knowledge of families, communities, and self, and is able to foster respectful and productive relationships with families in diverse home and community environments.

Rationale

Family involvement in the education of children is critical to student success in school. Comprehensive, long-term, and well-planned partnerships among families, schools, and community organizations lead to higher student achievement and self-esteem and better attitudes toward learning. Teachers need commitment to partnership and relevant knowledge and skills to assist the effective implementation of state, district, and school policies and programs of family involvement.

Factors to Consider

When an evaluation team judges whether a program meets this standard, the Commission expects the team to consider the extent to which:

- Each candidate is aware of the importance of home-school connections and is committed to the concept of partnership with families of all students.
- Each candidate understands the goals and benefits of different types of family involvement at different grade levels as well as barriers to their implementation.
- Each candidate learns about family structures, cultures, and processes and respects the beliefs, values, opinions, lifestyles, and child rearing practices of all families.
- Each candidate learns how to assist families in fulfilling support and resource roles in the classroom and how to connect learning activities at home and in the community with learning at school.
- Each candidate learns strategies for communicating and interacting responsibly with families about school and classroom programs and student progress.
- Each candidate understands and can demonstrate ways to work effectively with families in curriculum planning and delivery, motivating, supporting, and assessing student learning, and the day-to-day management of interactions with students.
- Each candidate learns how to actively participate in school decision making and governance in collaboration with families.
- Each candidate is able to think systematically about his/her family involvement attitudes and practices and learn from experience.
- Programs integrate and incorporate preparation for family involvement into instruction focused on theory and curriculum as well as on field experience.

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